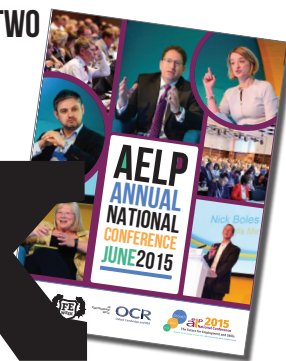




NOT ONE...

...BUT TWO



FREE WITH THIS ISSUE

FE Week

FREE WITH THIS ISSUE

PENSIONS WRITE-OFF IN EFA DEAL TO SHED CASH-STRAPPED COLLEGE

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EXCLUSIVE

The government paid a “one-off settlement” to write off the pension liabilities of a cash-strapped London college as part of a deal to secure new owners and remove it from the public sector, *FE Week* can reveal.

The Education Funding Agency (EFA) paid Hampshire County Council the undisclosed figure, believed to run into millions, to prevent pension liabilities from being transferred to national crime prevention charity Nacro when it takes on Totton College from November.

The deal was announced on Monday (June 22) and came after talks failed with other nearby colleges to merge or take over provision — but writing off pension liabilities was not part of the deals tabled to them by the EFA.

A Department for Education spokesperson said: “As Nacro is not a member of the Local Government Pension Scheme, it would not have been able to assume the associated liability.”

He added the EFA therefore paid a “one-off settlement” to the local authority but declined to comment on the sum involved.

A merger had been on the horizon for the 1,700-learner sixth form college since December when former principal Mike Gaston said it was looking at options. Sixth Form College Commissioner Peter Mucklow had warned it could not function alone having been placed under Financial Notice to Improve by the EFA.

But attempts to merge with nearby Eastleigh College were abandoned in March after the proposals were rejected by Eastleigh’s board and the following month learners were told A-levels were



Above: Kirklees College hospitality and catering curriculum team leader Gary Schofield presents his prized 30kg teacake and (right) hospitality and catering level one learner Declan Matthews, aged 17, takes the first bite



GIANT 30KG TEACAKE TAKES THE BISCUIT

How’s this for a light snack with your afternoon cup of tea?

Hospitality and catering students at Kirklees College helped curriculum team leader Gary Schofield (pictured) make the whopping 30kg chocolate teacake — believed to be the biggest in the world.

It was served up during the department’s annual prize-giving where it was sliced up and dished out.

“It’s nice to be able to celebrate our students’ fantastic achievements,” said Mr Schofield.

“They work hard all year so it is great to be able to round off the year with something fun. We believe the cake is the biggest in the world.”

The teacake was a 2kg biscuit base, topped with nine layers of marshmallow and covered in chocolate, measuring 90cm in diameter and 35cm in height.

The topping contained 15kg sugar, 84 eggs and 5kg of chocolate. It was created in the college’s training bakery and took around eight hours to make. It follows a giant jaffa cake of a similar size made by Mr Schofield last year.

The tin used for both desserts was specially made by the college’s engineering department.

being scrapped to focus on vocational qualifications. It is understood that Brockenhurst College also rejected a deal.

However, *FE Week* has learned that London-based Nacro, which uses skills and training to try to reduce crime and re-offending, was approached by EFA about taking over Totton, rated inadequate across the headline fields by Ofsted this month, with the proposition that pension liabilities would be written off.

A source from Totton, who correctly revealed that five Totton governors resigned ahead of a board meeting on June 18 when the decision to join Nacro was taken, said: “I

am aware of the pensions deal. For me this is a key aspect that should be brought into the open — is it really the best use of public funds? It was not offered to other colleges.”

Josh Coleman, director of education for Nacro which currently has around 3,200 learners and improved from an ‘inadequate’ Ofsted rating in March 2013 to ‘good’ last June, declined to comment on the pension agreement.

However, he said: “There are no skeletons in the cupboard. We were approached by the college and EFA [over joining with Totton].

“It hasn’t always worked when one college takes over another, so why shouldn’t they

turn to an organisation with a different perspective?”

He added that the deal involved Nacro taking on a £2m commercial loan.

A spokesperson for Totton declined to comment on the pension deal, but said: “Governors took into consideration the recommendations and advice from the EFA [at the June 18 meeting].”

Both Eastleigh and Brockenhurst declined to comment whether they had been extended the pension liabilities write-off deal for Totton by the EFA.

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FE WARNING FROM THE PAST
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LETTER SPELLS OUT SECTOR COMMITMENT
PAGE 6



DEVELOPING SKILLS AND BEHAVIOURS...

SEE BACK COVER FOR DETAILS

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EDITION 143

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NEWS

POLICE SHELVE INVESTIGATION INTO PROVIDER THAT OWED £800K

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Warwickshire Police have shelved their investigation into independent learning provider Bright International, which left learners, staff and other creditors £800k out of pocket when it was placed into administration last year.

A number of former learners claimed they paid for courses that were never certificated.

The Warwickshire-based provider then went under in September having been accused of “malpractice” by awarding organisation NCFE (formerly the Northern Council for Further Education).

It came after an *FE Week* report five months earlier revealed that NCFE and fellow awarding organisations OCR and Ascentis had stopped certificating Bright courses.

A four-month investigation by NCFE into alleged “malpractice” at Bright had concluded in February last year and led to the awarding body de-certificating 225 former learners who trained with the provider.

Warwickshire Police had repeatedly refused to either confirm or deny if it was investigating Bright. But a force spokesperson this month told *FE Week* that “an investigation into Bright, who were reported to not be registered with an awarding body or providing certificates for the training, has been filed pending any further information”.

She said: “Following a lengthy investigation it was established that no crime has been

committed as the company had no legal requirement to provide any certification.

“The contract that all private learners had with Bright was for the provision of training only and not the guarantee of a certificate.”

She confirmed this meant that the investigation had been shelved and would only be resumed if new evidence emerged.

Daniel Taylor, aged 33, from Hull, set up a Facebook forum last April, called Bright Training Problems, where a number of former learners claimed that they had paid the former provider for courses that were never certificated.

Mr Taylor claimed that he paid Bright £1,160, which he told *FE Week* on Wednesday (June 24) had not yet been repaid by creditors BDO, for level three assessor and level four preparing to teach in lifelong learning courses that he completed but were never certificated.

After hearing about the police decision, Mr Taylor said he was “disappointed”.

NCFE and Ascentis declined to comment on the police decision.

An OCR spokesperson said: “The outcome of the police investigation is a matter for the police.”

National Trading Standards declined to comment on whether it was carrying out a separate investigation into Bright.

Ofqual and BDO declined to comment on the police decision. Former Bright chief executive Krissy Charles-Jones (pictured) was not available for comment.



‘Still early days’ says BIS after just 300 Trailblazer starts

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The government has defended Trailblazer apprenticeships after official figures indicated there had been just 300 starts on the new employer-designed programmes in nine months.

It is the first time uptake data on Trailblazers, listed in the latest Statistical First Release (SFR), has been released and it further showed the programme appeared to have stalled with just 100 of the starts listed coming since November last year. The exact number of starts remains unknown as in the SFR “volumes are rounded to the nearest 100”.

A Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) spokesperson said: “Trailblazers is a new programme and the figures included in the June 2015 SFR are provisional in-year estimates. The figures are subject to change when the final full year data is published in November.”

Association of Colleges skills policy manager Teresa Frith said “uncertainty” surrounding Trailblazers meant it was “not surprising” uptake had been slow.

Association of Employment and Learning Providers chief executive Stewart Segal said the solution to boosting Trailblazers was to involve more providers in their development.

He said: “We have always asked for a clearer strategic programme over a longer period to make the transition from frameworks to standards.”

Trailblazer standards are a key part of government reforms and as of March this year there were 24 ready for delivery, according to the Skills Funding Agency website. But the government has said its ambition is for all apprenticeship starts to be on the Trailblazer standards from 2017/18. The BIS spokesperson added: “The pipeline of standards is increasing all the time with 129 currently approved and a significant number of new ones likely to be approved next month.”

The provisional SFR data also revealed a resurgence in the number of 25+ apprenticeships, which have gone from representing 32 per cent of all apprenticeships to 40 per cent. They fuelled growth in apprenticeship starts overall to 374,200 so far this year — an increase of 59,600 on the provisional data for the same period last year.

Of the total number of starts since the beginning of the year, 150,300 were 25+, up 50,000 on the same time last year, while 101,700 16 to 19-year-olds started apprenticeships — a 6,500 increase.

Ms Frith said: “To be taken on as an apprentice, a young person needs to be a

FE WEEK NEWS IN BRIEF
Headed to outstanding

A Nottingham hairdressing apprenticeship provider has shot up two Ofsted grades to outstanding in just over a year.

NHTA Ltd, inspected last month, received grade one ratings in all headline fields, with inspectors identifying “a relentless drive for improvement”.

Charlotte Moreland, managing director of the 96-learner independent learning provider with a Skills Funding Agency allocation of £760k, said: “We are passionate about supporting young people.” See feweek.co.uk for more, including Ms Moreland on how she went from grade three to outstanding.

Providers’ register open

The Skills Funding Agency’s register of training organisations is open for applications until 5pm on Friday, July 3.

Would-be providers wishing to offer agency-funded training must be entered on the register to compete for contracts and sub-contracts, and must complete due diligence capacity and capability questions.

Providers should include their geographical area and the type of provision it would deliver as this information would be used to invite providers to tender.

New standards added

Apprenticeship Trailblazer standards have been added as a searchable learning aim on the Hub, used to search for and calculate funding rates.

The word ‘Standards’ now appears in the ‘Type of Learning’ options list and will display the details of apprenticeship standards.

Currently, however, the option does not contain any information — the apprenticeship standards data is due to be added at a later date. Email servicedesk@sfa.bis.gov.uk for more details.

good bet and low risk for an employer. This is perhaps why most apprenticeship starts in the past few years have actually been with older age groups.” She said there was a need to “incentivise” employers to “take the plunge” of offering an apprenticeship to a young person.

Meanwhile, Mr Segal said the increase in 25+ apprenticeships was due to a dip last year due to the failed FE loans system for apprenticeships which had put off huge numbers of learners.

Dr Fiona Aldridge, assistant director for development and research at the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education, said: “It is always encouraging to see people of all ages getting training and support in work.

“However we would be concerned if the high proportion of people aged 25+ on apprenticeships was just a way of recognising current competencies and not representing the true skills development that so many people, workplaces and our economy needs.”

The SFR also revealed traineeship starts had more than doubled since the same time last year, with 15,100 in the first three quarters of 2014/15 compared to 7,400 in 2013/14.

Skills Minister Nick Boles said: “These figures show we are on course to create a modern and competitive workforce that boosts the country’s productivity and prosperity.”

New BIS committee chair calls for ‘real controls’ on success rates

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New Business, Innovation and Skills Select Committee chair Iain Wright has called for “real controls and mitigating actions” on success rates cheating amid claims it was widespread within the FE sector.

In an exclusive interview with *FE Week*, the MP for Hartlepool, who ousted former committee chair and fellow Labour politician Adrian Bailey in an MPs’ vote this month, said the problem of data manipulation “undermines confidence” in FE.

He addressed the issue with North Hertfordshire College (NHC) principal Matt Hamnett having revealed how he discovered it had been taking place in the college before he took over three months ago.

Mr Hamnett who put an end to the practice, said details of failing learners were omitted from ILR returns as far back as 2008, with the effect of inflating classroom-based success rates by around 4 percentage points to 90.5 per cent last academic year.

His predecessor as principal Signe Sutherland has not commented publicly on the issue, while her predecessor Fintan Donohue, chief executive of Gazelle, denied any knowledge of such cheating during his time at the college.

And while Mr Wright said it was too early to name specific issues his committee would investigate, neither did he rule out a hearing into the issue.



Iain Wright MP and (inset right) *FE Week* coverage this month of success rates cheating at NHC



“It’s not in anybody’s interests not to have proper, correct means of success,” he said.

“If you’re inflating your success rates, it undermines confidence in the entire system, so there has got to be real controls and mitigating actions in place to avoid that, so that everyone has confidence. So if a college is saying they have a success rate of whatever, everyone can believe that.”

It comes with *FE Week* readers having taken to the comments section of the newspaper website with claims cheating went on elsewhere. Reader Kim Hayter wrote: “Not sure what the fuss is about really... this practice of cutting off non-achieving candidates from the ILR has been happening for years in the sector.”

Another reader, named Chris, wrote: “This used to happen at the college I worked for. Every year the data would be amended as it was ‘not good enough’.

“The principal was well aware of what went on, but because they did it every year, they found they could not stop.

“I suspect there are a few principals who have felt rather uneasy reading this headline. I hope they have a couple of sleepless nights over this.”

Another reader, Julie, wrote: “It’s the same at our college. The principal’s view is that if the rest of the sector are doing this then we need to as well.

“I just can’t understand why the Education Funding Agency and Skills Funding Agency

[SFA] don’t do something to stop this.”

An SFA spokesperson said data manipulation to inflate success rates was “not acceptable”, adding that it expected “every provider” to submit delivery and performance data that “gives a true reflection of its position”.

She added: “As part of our standard processes we carry out funding audits on colleges and training organisations which help us to make sure provision has been delivered in accordance with our published Funding Rules. We will conduct our own investigations where necessary.

“Should we find any delivery and performance data issues that have not been addressed, either reported by a college or provider or picked up through our systems, we will take action. We also alert Ofsted and the Education Funding Agency of any issues.”

Visit feweek.co.uk for a wide-ranging Q&A with Mr Wright

Principal issues Ofsted complaint after fall from outstanding

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A college that fell two Ofsted grades from outstanding has issued a formal complaint against Ofsted claiming it unfairly judged a drop in success rates because of new rules on English and maths.

Oldham College was given a grade three rating, as previously reported by *FE Week*, but it has now challenged the verdict.

College principal Alun Francis (pictured) claims there was a problem with new performance ratings factoring in success in English and maths.

In 2013, the introduction of study programmes for 16 to 19-year-old learners forced providers to make English and maths learners reach a grade C at GCSE in those subjects.

Last September, the 7,500-learner college calculated its success rate at 89 per cent, but planned for a small decrease once English and maths results were factored in nationwide results published in January.

But a drop to 83.7 per cent moved the college from being in the top 15 per cent of colleges for performance to the top 40 per cent, and it has



been claimed Ofsted began its inspection in May with this in mind, leading to unfair disadvantage.

Mr Francis confirmed he had complained to Ofsted, but declined to comment further than his initial statement on the grading in which he said: “A new performance measure, introduced in January 2015, was applied retrospectively during our inspection process in May.

“The inspection team was open about the fact that this meant the college could not be treated on the same basis as colleges inspected before January 2015, but aimed to achieve parity with those inspected since then. We are not confident that this was the case.”

In its inspection report, Oldham, which has a current Education Funding Agency allocation of £14.3m and a current Skills Funding Agency allocation of 8.5m, was criticised for its apprenticeship completion rate, poor attendance and punctuality of learners and “insufficient development” of some learners in English and maths.

“Weak target-setting” and “insufficient” written feedback from tutors and a lack of meaningful work experience were also highlighted, and the college was told “too much teaching” required improvement.

An Ofsted spokesperson said: “Ofsted has received a formal complaint from the college.

“Therefore, we are unable to comment on the details while we carry out an investigation on the matter.”

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Former FE Funding Council boss lends

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Former FE funding boss Sir David Melville has become the latest high-profile voice to express serious concerns about the government's handling of the sector.

The current chair of Pearson Education Ltd and governor of Manchester Metropolitan University, who was chief executive of the FE Funding Council from 1997 to 2001, told *FE Week* of his fears for FE with comments that backed the findings of government adviser Professor Lady Alison Wolf.

She said FE could "vanish into history" as government funding for the sector, which will see provider budgets slashed by 24 per cent next academic year, was swallowed up by apprenticeships.

Professor Wolf, who wrote the influential 2011 review of vocational education, warned the government's "largely unfunded" pledge to deliver 3m apprenticeship starts by the end of the current Parliament could come at the cost of the rest of the sector.

Writing for *FE Week* [on page 5] with an outline of her report, entitled *Heading for the precipice: can further and higher education funding policies be sustained?* (pictured above far right), she said government "must rebalance funding from higher education to other high-quality 19+ provision".

And Sir David said he shared her concerns. He said: "What Alison Wolf's report highlights



Sir David Melville

is the need for what I would call an integrated approach to post-19 funding and in particular that if cuts have to be made then they should be made in higher education as opposed to FE, because the balance is all wrong."

National Institute of Adult Continuing Education chief executive David Hughes said Professor Wolf's was a "high-profile voice" joining a "chorus of concern" about how the lack of skills training opportunities for adults "threatens this country's future social and economic well-being".

He added: "The

government's focus on apprenticeships is welcome but they are not the only answer. The FE sector should be viewed as a vital part of the solution rather than being hit again and again with funding cuts."

Stewart Segal, AELP chief executive, said: "It was right the professor tilted the debate towards comparing FE and higher education spends, rather than one that just looks at apprenticeships against other FE provision."

He added: "As Professor Wolf says, the focus should be on whether the whole of the post-16 education and skills budget, including HE, is meeting the priorities of the government."

Professor Wolf's report came just days after Skills Minister Nick Boles (pictured left) revealed at the Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP) annual conference how official research indicating a better return on public cash from apprenticeships over other forms of adult education would "guide" future policy.

Mr Boles used his appearance at the AELP conference on Monday (June 22) to point to a government report published earlier in the day,

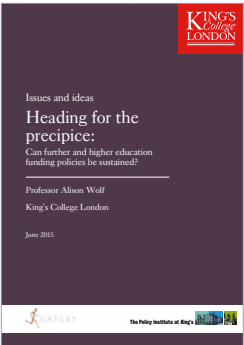
entitled *Measuring the Net Present Value of Further Education in England*, which showed there was a £28 return for every £1 invested in level three apprenticeships, but for non-apprenticeship courses at level three the return was 43 per cent lower at £16.

He also reaffirmed the government's commitment to look at the general FE college model, as outlined in the Conservative manifesto [see feweek.co.uk for the minister's full speech].

Sir David said: "Despite what many people think, the majority of 16 and 17-year-olds taking what you might call conventional qualifications are in colleges not schools. What it means is colleges are shifting to become more like school sixth forms, especially with the requirement that they continue to educate people in English and maths.

"The issue with that is that the vocational skills, right up to pre-degree level, are disappearing. FE as we know it is in danger of disappearing, and of course this will then lead the government to re-assess the whole of what you might call sixth form provision and take the view that we don't need an FE sector.

"Action is needed now because we know that cuts are likely, and if they fall predominantly on FE,



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weight to concerns for sector future

which it rather looks like they will, we will see the sector decline even more rapidly.”

Association of Colleges (AoC) assistant chief executive Julian Gravatt (pictured near left) said the AoC agreed the government faced “difficult public spending choices”, but said he also had “confidence that the college model works”.

He said: “They are ambitious and resilient institutions at the heart of the community, with excellent relationships with local businesses. They will play a vital role in the delivery of the 3m new apprenticeships the government plans to create.


“Colleges have the scale to cross-subsidise important specialist provision and have ensured they stayed in business despite six years of public spending cuts.”

A spokesperson for the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills said: “The government is committed to creating 3m apprenticeship starts by 2020 and will continue to work with colleges and business to ensure that happens.

“We will continue to focus investment in areas that have the most impact on increasing the skills of our workforce and help increase productivity across the country.”

See page 13 for an expert piece by 157 Group executive director Dr Lynne Sedgmore and visit feweek.co.uk for an expert piece on Professor Wolf’s findings by Cambridge Regional College principal Anne Constantine

PROFESSOR LADY ALISON WOLF



Sir Roy Griffiths
Professor of Public Sector
Management at King’s
College London and author
of the 2011 Wolf Review of
Vocational Education

Addressing the FE funding imbalance

Policy Exchange head of education Jonathan Simons last week called for higher education funding to be diverted to FE. Professor Lady Alison Wolf’s latest report makes largely the same case and she explains her argument.

English governments have, for decades, been obsessed with education’s role as a supposed engine of growth. But you wouldn’t guess it from the way they allocate spending, and consistently ignore what the labour market is telling them.

Since 2010 — as most *FE Week* readers will know — the government’s Adult Skills budget has declined sharply. Funding per full-time equivalent college-based student in 2012 was about £2,150 per year: spending per apprentice

was even less.

Universities, meanwhile, were moving to universal £9,000 a-year fees. Even allowing for bursaries and fee waivers, they currently are receiving around £8,400 a-year for ‘home’ university undergraduates. The last few years have been a golden age, financially, for higher education.

The imbalance is even greater when you include participation rates. University participation rates for young people in England are now close to 50 per cent: conversely, there is a population of around 28.3m 20 to 60-year-olds who are not and never have been in higher education. The adult skills budget is the main source of government support for education and training of this group. Yet in 2009-10, the allocation was £142 per head of population; today it is below £70 in 2000 prices.

This makes no sense. We are at this point in large part because policy-makers note that graduates have historically earned a lot, and therefore assume that more expenditure on higher education will be highly ‘productive’.

Removing the cap on undergraduate numbers will clearly exacerbate this situation. Young people will increasingly head for the better funded, undergraduate route. And yet concrete pay-offs to many degrees are plateauing; and UK productivity has been stagnating despite huge year-on-year growth in graduate numbers.

Meanwhile, we neglect skills which will

make a major contribution to the country’s productivity. Successive government interventions have incentivised high-volume, low-cost provision.

Qualifications across the adult skills sector are concentrated at low levels. Apprenticeship numbers are also overwhelmingly in areas that are cheap to deliver. For example, at level three or above (technician level) less than 5 per cent of apprenticeships are in the science, IT and engineering sectors that are critical to economic growth.

The government’s target of 3m apprentices threatens to push the system towards yet more of the cheap, low-level same.

Meanwhile, ‘level four’ technician qualifications are virtually non-existent. In a typical year, only about 20,000 people have obtained a level four qualification — while well over a quarter of a million young English people graduate with a bachelor’s degree.

Our system is not producing sufficient technicians even though there is strong labour market demand.

What should be done? Government must rebalance funding from higher education to other high-quality 19+ provision.

More generally, we must start to consider post-19 education as a whole, not as two separate bunkers. Otherwise we will perpetuate a system which is both unjust and inefficient, and divorced from the labour market. Our future prosperity is at risk.

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FE WEEK COMMENT

EFA right off public sector

It's been a strange few weeks for FE and skills.

It's a sector that has been given its moment to shine with apprenticeships and that 3m target one of the government's key focuses.

And yet of course more recently providers have been kept waiting to find out if there's any cash for their recent extra apprenticeship starters.

Finding money is a problem for all government departments. This is something everybody can agree on, or so we thought.

Because we learn that the Education Funding Agency managed to pull out millions from somewhere to allow Totton College to be taken over by the private sector (albeit a charity).

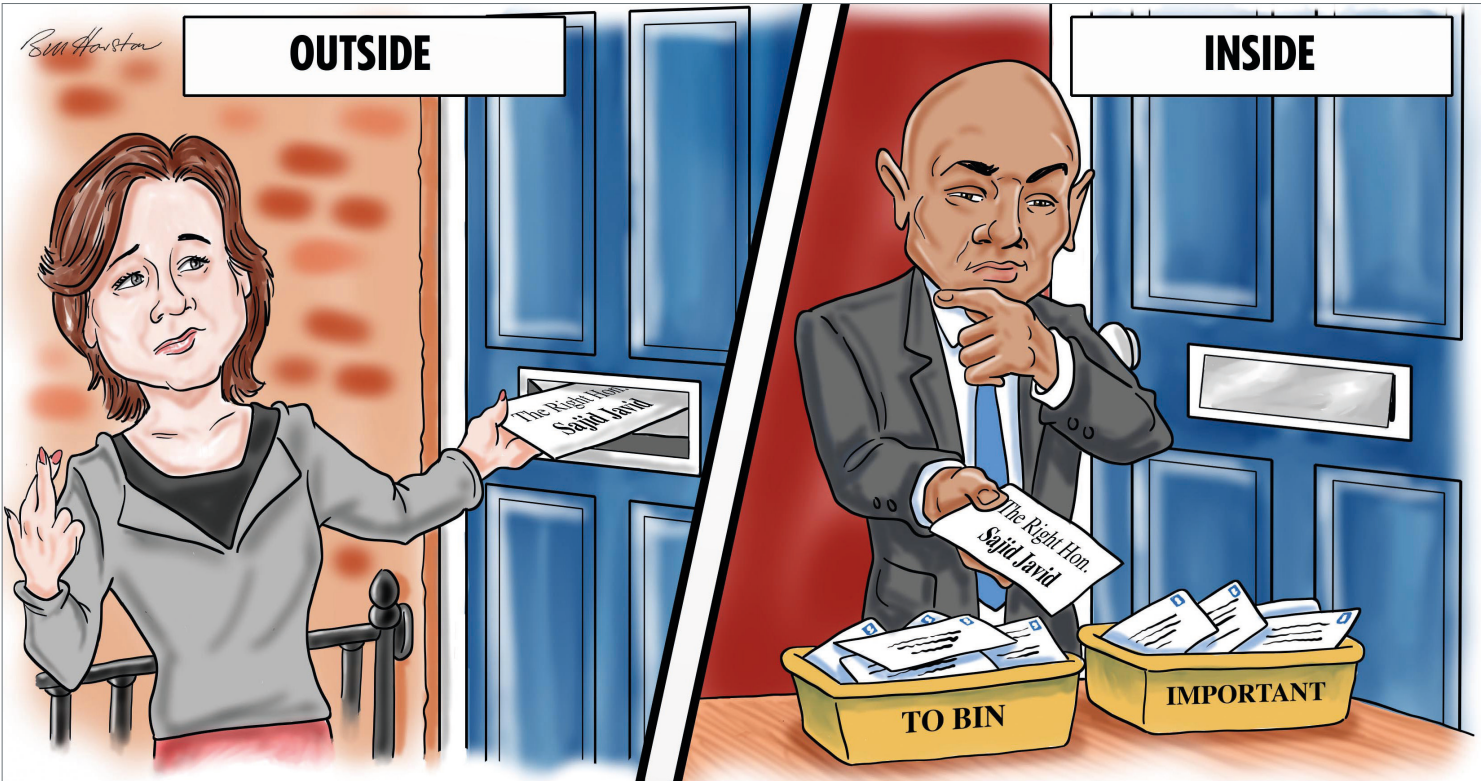
The government might argue this money remained in the public sector because it went to Hampshire County Council to write off Totton's pension liabilities, but it nevertheless represents public money used to sanction privatisation.

And if the pensions deal wasn't or couldn't have been offered to other colleges to take on Totton, why could the deal not have been incentivised in other ways by the EFA? — After all the money would have stayed in public sector hands with another college. As, crucially, Totton would have too.

Chris Henwood
chris.henwood@feweek.co.uk

TOP WOLF REPORT TWEETS

- @RGSpcSolutions**
Someone so influential in the changes now criticising what is happening. Methinks need to think about impact first?
- @CherylTurner3**
Prof Wolf rpt argues 'unstable, inefficient, untenable & unjust' FE funding is destroying educ outside universities
- @Gainesk1959**
Alison Wolf is not innocent in the problems of FE. THE Wolf report on vocational education started the latest trend
- @JulianGravatt**
One chart in Alison Wolf's report (Page 54) shows total Russell Group univ income >£12 bil. Almost 50% of UK total
- @anthonympainter**
The new @gatsbyed Wolf report points to a 750,000+ lost adult learners (!) per year compared with 5 years ago



Hopes for a positive response to Javid letter

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Sector leaders backed “radical change” and stressed that they do not want to “defend the status quo” in a joint letter to Business Secretary Sajid Javid (pictured front).

The letter, seen by *FE Week*, was sent by Kirstie Donnelly (pictured right), UK managing director of City & Guilds, on behalf of a host of organisations including the Association of Colleges, the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education, 157 Group, and the Association of Employment and Learning Providers. The other organisations signed-up to it were Creative Skillset, Energy and Utility Skills, the Trades Union Congress, the Edge Foundation, and the Lep (local enterprise partnership) Network.

The letter said they could “collectively” help the government with, for example, delivering 3m apprenticeships by 2020, developing higher and degree level apprenticeships, improving careers advice, boosting traineeships, and providing “specialist higher-level vocational

training in sectors critical to economic growth”.

“Our aim is not to defend the status quo,” it said. “Radical change is needed to the funding and regulation of the FE system, the way we engage with people and employers, the way we offer and manage learning and skills, and create skills pathways which are easy to navigate, from first steps to high level professional qualifications.”

The letter warned that employers and individuals were “confused” by multiple funding streams, qualification levels, “unhelpful” distinctions between FE and HE, and “differences between apprenticeships and other forms of work-based training”.

“The answer is, of course, simplification — something we all want to achieve,” it added.

It said the organisations that signed-up to the letter “have extensive experience of policy implementation, knowledge of what works in the UK and around the world, and an ability to find ways round potential pitfalls”.

Warning of the potential

pitfalls of “too much change” and “mistakes” that “were often repeated” in the past, it added that “we can draw on lessons from the past 30 years of skills policy”. It said that they would “like to meet you as soon as possible and take this forward together”, adding that “while this offer is to work collectively with you on common aims, we recognise that there will be times when you want to talk to our organisations individually and we to you”.

Dr Ann Limb, chair of South East Midlands Lep, who signed-up to the letter on behalf of the Lep Network, said that the idea behind sending a collective letter to Mr Javid, who was appointed to run the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills on May 11, was to send a “positive message” to the new minister.

She thought it showed that all of the organisations were prepared to take a “grown up” approach to managing funding cuts and implementing the government’s skills agenda.

A BIS spokesperson said: “We will respond in due course”.



COMMENTS

‘Governors don’t know entrepreneurship’ — Donohue

To make a statement that governors “don’t know what entrepreneurship is,” surprises me.

Over the last 30 months I have met some pretty inspiring college governors who really understand exactly what being an entrepreneur is, having themselves translated innovative ideas into successful businesses.

They have done it in the real world and in some colleges governors are exceeding their statutory role by giving students a real insight into what setting up a small business is all about, as hands-on speakers and facilitators in enterprise weeks.

Fintan may have been trying to drum up new business for the Gazelle group with that

headline, but as governors should have a role in determining what their college invests money into, that headline won’t go down particularly well if the aim was to expand membership.

Phil Hatton

I am disappointed with Fintan’s comment. Many of my governors are dynamic entrepreneurs running extremely successful enterprises.

Let’s not undermine governors’ significant contribution in steering a number of our colleges into innovative businesses including mine.

Dame Asha Khemka

FE to pay for tougher numerical GCSE pass rates warning

The question that remains unanswered is how so many schools/academies can be good or outstanding yet thousands of young people leave these institutions without basic maths and English skills.

FE will then be paid peanuts and be expected to make up for 11 years of underachievement in around 30 weeks.

Failure to right the wrongs of the last eleven years will then lead to FE colleges being castigated for failing to perform miracles.

Only the most stupid of policy makers would fail to understand the irony of the situation.

L Roding



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PROFILE



Some students can be a bit shy at first with the dances, but they usually come round pretty quickly and 99 times out of 100 will get involved



PASSING ON THE BIOLOGY B

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It all started with coffee for globe-trotting college tutor Dr Richard Spencer, whose acclaimed classroom approach has seen him meet Pope Francis and former US President Bill Clinton.

The Middlesbrough College head of science has been to The Vatican, in Rome, and Dubai having been listed as the only European teacher named in February's 10-strong shortlist for the \$1m (£636k) Varkey Foundation Global Teacher Prize, widely considered the Nobel Prize for teaching.

The father-of-three lost out to American-based English teacher Nancie Atwell, who was named overall winner, but his biology-related dances, poems and music have already earned plenty of acclaim.

Bede College, a sixth form college in his home town of Billingham, County Durham, won an excellence in teaching biology Beacon Award during his 22-year spell there.

And 51-year-old Spencer, who plays piano and violin, has won a number of other awards, including two national STAR awards (FE teacher of the year and outstanding subject learning coach).

He was also awarded an MBE in 2010 for services to science communication and has involved his students with projects which have been presented at conferences and festivals across Europe.

But it all started with coffee back at Bede College not long after he started.

"For most of my time there, my principal was Miriam Stanton, who was just brilliant at nurturing the staff," explains Spencer, who started at Bede College having completed a PGCE at Durham University.

"She encouraged me and all the other teachers to try different things out.

"I taught chemistry and biology A-level at first but switched 100 per cent to biology in 1997 and that's when I really started to get into creative teaching.

"The one that started it off is something

called the Mitosis Mamba —a dance that explains what chromosomes do in cell division.

"I remember I taught a very bright lad called Ben, but after trying to explain mitosis to him through practical work, a video and simulation using pipe-cleaners, he still told me 'I don't get it'.

"I started explaining how cells divide using my hands and fingers and told him: 'It's a bit like a dance'. Then I thought: 'It could be a dance'.

"I remembered a Maxwell House coffee advert from when I was a child that featured a woman shaking a fist of coffee beans. It matched my actions well, so I found an old 1920s song called 'There's an awful lot of coffee in Brazil', to do the dance to.

"I still do it with students today and you can see them shuffling around in exams remembering how it goes."

Spencer, known by his learners as Doc, has since created include the DNA Boogie, to the Jackson Five song Blame it on the Boogie, and

The Heart Song, which explains the structure of the heart to the tune of Heads, Shoulders, Knees and Toes.

He has also developed the Gram Stain Rap, which explains staining techniques to distinguish between different bacteria, the Meiosis Square Dance, which explains how sex cells are produced, and an animated pantomime video that loosely uses the story of Jack and the Beanstalk to explain different modes of nutrition.

"Some students can be a bit shy at first with the dances, but they usually come round pretty quickly and 99 times out of 100 will get involved," says Spencer.

"Traditional teaching methods are still very important, but I find that it helps to think of other ways of helping students to learn.

"I bump into students 12 or 13 years down the line who can recall all the words and actions, which is nice, including my dentist."

Spencer's own interest in science is rooted in the same personal style of connection he adopts with his learners.



It's a personal thing

What's your favourite book?

The Go-Between by LP Hartley

What do you do to switch off from work?

Research my family history

What's your pet hate?

Discourtesy

If you could invite anyone, living or dead, to a dinner party, who would it be?

Sir Anthony Carlisle, my distant cousin who was possibly the inspiration behind Mary Shelley's Frankenstein

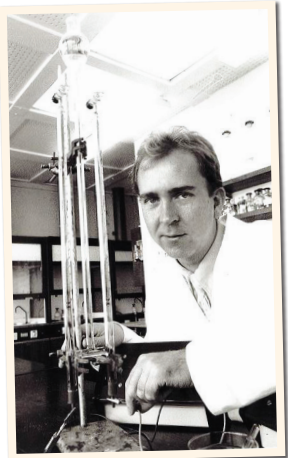
What did you want to be when you were growing up?

A farmer

Spencer with Bill Clinton



Spencer and Pope Francis



Spencer in a science lab in 1994

Spencer as a baby



Spencer (third from right) at his parents' Golden wedding anniversary with his siblings in 2003

Spencer demonstrating one of his dances to learners



It came from his great uncle Eddie, who “lived around the corner” during his childhood and he “loved nature”. “He used to take me out to a place called Saltburn [in North Yorkshire], which was a beach by a wood where you would see all sorts of animals,” recalls Spencer affectionately. “He also bought me a book called ‘Animals of East Africa’ which fired my imagination. “I got really into animals and nature and was lucky that my parents let me keep my own pets, mostly tortoises and budgies. I also bred butterflies and moths in a cage at my dad’s allotment — I think I was a bit strange.” He moved briefly to Cardiff to study applied biology at the University of Wales Institute of Science and Technology after his Billingham school days “I had an offer to do a DPhil at Oxford University after graduating, but I don’t think I realised how prestigious it was, so turned it down,” he says. “It’s crazy looking back, but I decided instead to do my PhD at the North East

Biotechnology Centre instead, which was part of Sunderland Polytechnic.” He lived in Sunderland in the late 1980s and early 1990s, but returned to Billingham in 1994 after marrying Elaine, now aged 52. “We went to St Michael’s Roman Catholic Comprehensive School, in Billingham, but didn’t know each other very well as children. We got married within six weeks of properly meeting each other,” says Spencer. He progressed from the PhD to post-doctoral research in Salmonella genetics at Sunderland University, where he was given the chance to lecture for the first time. “That was how I got into teaching, because I realised that I enjoyed teaching more than research,” he says. More than two decades at Bede followed before Spencer moved to Middlesbrough College in 2014, the same year he was named as one of the UK’s Leading 100 Practising Scientists. Spencer learned in February that he had been shortlisted for the Varkey Foundation

“Winning these awards has been great, but the most important thing to me has always been teaching and inspiring young people”

Global Teacher Prize and was particularly excited to meet Pope Francis as a result. He said: “It was an amazing experience, as I am religious. To me it comes down to a simple question of whether you believe or not. Religion can co-exist with science, as in my view you can never prove or disprove that God exists.” Spencer was interviewed ahead of the award ceremony in Dubai on the BBC Breakfast television show, Good Morning Britain, Saturday Live on radio four and radio Five Live. “I’m pleased if that helped generate some recognition for the FE sector, as I don’t think it gets the credit it deserves,” he said. “Winning these awards has been great, but the most important thing to me has always been teaching and inspiring young people,” he added. “I didn’t think up the songs and dances for public recognition — the priority behind them all was always to find new ways of explaining complicated processes and making learning fun.”

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EXPERTS

SECRET PRINCIPAL

The principal of a large and well-established FE college writes about life at the top — the worries, the hopes, the people and the issues they have to deal with every day.

Wake up and smell the coffee
Professor Alison Wolf, architect of the government’s vocational education plans and labour market guru says cuts to FE colleges and growth of universities could see the UK lose a valuable source of technicians and mechanics.

Britain’s supply of skilled workers may “vanish into history” if looming budget cuts in FE and the unchecked expansion of universities are allowed to continue.

She adds that “unstable, inefficient, untenable and unjust” funding is destroying education provision for school-leavers outside of universities. But let’s not get into the ‘University or us’ debate (we’ll lose that one) and ask the government to think long and hard about the value of FE and ‘who pays’.

FE provides the bulk of the UK’s post-secondary training and faces collapse and the loss of a valuable source of professionals and technicians.

Whither lifelong learning?
Adult education and training funding has been in freefall for some years with millions fewer learners and forced redundancies — averaging more than 100 staff per college since 2010 and climbing. A 24 per cent cut is pending for 15/16 and we’ll see another double digit cut in 16/17 unless Osborne pulls a budget rabbit out of the hat and/or the Comprehensive Spending Review throws us a lifeline in October.

FE colleges — already under budget pressures — face a further threat if the government takes resources from the FE budget to fund its plans to expand apprenticeships. The last remaining vestiges of the Adult Single budget (other) will be raided to feed apprenticeships, moving money away from where there’s abundant demand to where money has to be spent on marketing and advisers to boost demand.

Some solutions
FE colleges are the best place for technical and professional training that is business-facing and rooted in the local economy.

The FE sector has taken more than its share of the austerity cuts. Many colleges are in deficit and selling off the family silver just to survive. Please support us.

And consolidation (aka merger) doesn’t necessarily solve anything — witness the financial blackholes in some of the bigger colleges.

And I don’t sense any pressure to make schools more effective and efficient. Why are there more than 1,100 schools in this country with fewer than 100 learners in their sixth forms? Where’s the value for money and what’s the quality and learner experience like?! Wouldn’t these learners be better served in FE and sixth form colleges which offer a wider range of courses which relate to UK PLC? This would save money and reduce over-supply.

Less money more freedom
Reduce hypothecated funding which leads to underspend or rushed work. We want freedom to follow demand, let the customer decide. They know best not ministers (or principals).

If the taxpayer won’t pay then we’ve got to get the customer (or their bosses) to, so extend FE loans to level two and adults 19+ and above uncapped.

You do it for higher education so do it for FE
Let us charge for maths and English — if they are that important, learners should pay. We have discretion to waive fees for those who can’t afford to.

Don’t give the money to employers — there’s a conflict of interest, let them use their own training budgets; and scrap nonsense schemes like the Employer Ownership pilots and put them into FE budgets.

Governments should also switch other training budgets for example those at the Department for Work and Pensions to education and skills to avoid waste and duplication.

Liam Byrne, Shadow Skills Minister, said Wolf’s report is a wake-up call for the “brutal neglect” of the UK’s FE sector. He also famously left the ‘there’s no money left’ note for the incoming Coalition government in 2010. That’s still the problem. Everyone says they love FE, but no one wants to pay for it.

Secret Principal



ANDREW GLADSTONE-HEIGHTON

Policy leader at NCFE

Questions yet to be answered in Ofqual’s QCF reforms

Ofqual recently outlined its plans for closing the unit databank as part of its ongoing work to withdraw the regulatory arrangements for the Qualification and Credit Framework (QCF). Andrew Gladstone-Heighton outlines his concerns.

Just to make it clear at the outset; I’ve been in the sector long enough to remember the introduction of the QCF (which means my FE career has now outlived two qualifications frameworks), so I’m fully aware that the QCF is in need of some reform.

However, from reading their plans, there are a number of things that need to be taken into consideration about what the proposals outlined will mean for the sector.

I do agree that removal of some the restrictions of the shared unit databank (and the regulatory arrangements of the QCF in general) will enable awarding organisations (AOs) to provide more creative and innovative responses to employer and learners needs — this is where AOs really add value to our qualification framework.

However, we have to bear in mind that this has been published in the middle of an ongoing Ofqual consultation, and following a period of intense and ongoing reform for vocational qualifications. Having previously set out their aspiration to withdraw the QCF rules in the 2015/16 session; I can’t help but get the impression that these reforms are being rushed through.

As they are currently set out by Ofqual, any changes or restrictions to AO accessing the unit databank may, in my opinion, lead to a situation where qualifications may have to be redeveloped as the shared content within them may be restricted to the original unit submitting body, should they choose to withdraw their content.

While it’s currently unclear as to whether this would mean the qualification would have to be resubmitted to the Ofqual register (with the new Qualification Accreditation Number that this usually entails), it may mean that learners and other stakeholders will face further changes to qualifications they are interested in studying.

There may be disruption in the qualifications available to learners as some component units of qualifications are no longer ‘available’ as shared units.

Also of concern is a potential increase in the volume of units available, as a version of each (now shared) unit becomes owned by each AO that offers it. Transferability between qualifications (a key concept of the

QCF that I strongly support) may become harder to achieve as a consequence, as they will no longer be made up of transferable common content. This will place additional burdens on providers, AOs and employers when agreeing to and recognising any prior learning.

I have concerns, shared by SquareOneLaw, that the disentanglement of ‘ownership’ of shared and co-created units currently on the unit bank introduces the potential complexities posed by possession (or otherwise) of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR). While it is acknowledged that IPR cannot be retrospectively attached to a product, there is no doubt some AOs may feel somewhat aggrieved that their hard work and financial investment channelled into shared unit development may now not be rewarded with reciprocal rewards, should some AOs choose to withdraw their content.

I can’t help but get the impression that these QCF reforms are being rushed through

It is highly unlikely that small to medium-sized AOs have the appetite or the resources to fight one another over ownership. Ideally, we would want an industry-wide solution with perhaps contractual agreements between AOs and/or an open source arrangement, perhaps with Ofqual’s facilitation.

Another thing that is currently unclear is to what extent Ofqual’s reforms have been linked to the various funding agencies’ plans for qualification approval. From what I’ve heard, Ofqual is working with the relevant agencies where appropriate, and it would be a missed opportunity to align a new qualifications and unit funding system with the removal of shared units and withdrawal of the QCF rules more widely.

All of this may seem quite geeky and technical to the layperson, but if we are to secure confidence in vocational qualifications as a rigorous and responsive high quality alternative to academia with employers, learners and policy makers, then I fear the some of the unanswered questions above may undermine this noble aspiration.

Women from across the FE and skills sector were at the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills conference centre in Westminster on June 17 for the WLN annual conference. Sara Mogel gives an overview of the event.

Women leaders in FE were told by Anne Doyle, journalist, author and former director at Ford Motor Company, to ‘embrace and exert our women power’ in a reflection of Michelle Obama’s recent assertion about girl power.

Anne, a renowned international speaker on women’s leadership, was addressing at this month’s annual conference of the Women’s Leadership Network entitled ‘Women mean Business’.

She compared women leaders in the UK with the rest of the world and pointed out to delegates that only 20 per cent of UK leadership positions were held by women whereas Russia has 43 per cent and China 38 per cent, which underlined the business case for having more women in leadership roles.

She outlined strategies women can use to ensure they are given a fairer chance of leadership and gave some practical advice from her own career.

At a time of great challenge in the FE sector the need for women leaders to both step forward and be given the support, especially by men, to do so was well set out by Anne as she challenged delegates to ‘dare to lead’.

Delegates also heard from Julia Von Klonowski, director of education for Europe,



SARA MOGEL OBE
Women’s Leadership Network (WLN) director and former West Cheshire College principal

Leadership issues on the agenda for FE women

Middle East and Africa at Oracle, and her daughter Lauren Best, PR manager at the Lawn Tennis Association, about the power of being a role model where they discussed their views, sometimes differing, about not just being a role model but current good and bad role models.

During the day workshops and other speakers covered a wide range of topics including confederations, growing apprenticeships in challenging time, developing an online profile, delivering organisational change through wellness, managing and developing talent, being a connected leader and meeting the challenges currently facing the sector.

There was also a chance for delegates to get a taste of coaching in the WLN’s ‘speed coaching’ sessions throughout the event.

The WLN’s Star Award for 2015 was also

announced at the conference. This annual award, sponsored this year by AA Projects, went to an outstanding woman leader in the FE sector.

The recipient was Sue Middlehurst, principal and chief executive of Grimsby Institute Group. In the award citation, Sally Dicketts, WLN chair, said Sue had “come through the ranks of FE, from teacher to principal, in both the North and the South East of England”. She had also seen life from the other side of the fence as a well-respected inspector for both the FEFC and Ofsted, said Sally.

Throughout Sue’s career she has developed and demonstrated a coaching style that has seen her managers and staff succeed through empowerment and trust. She has done this while taking on some of the most challenging roles in FE and in particular has

made her name in successfully managing change.
She is known for saying ‘how it is’ and not hiding difficult messages and because of this is respected and trusted both within the sector and outside of it by stakeholders. She is steadfastly unwavering in her ‘learner first’ ethos which underscores her passion for the core business of FE and the importance of the sector for people’s life chances and choices.

At a time of great challenge in the FE sector the need for women leaders to both step forward and be given the support, especially by men, to do so was well set out

This was reflected in Sue’s acceptance speech where she urged delegates to be true to their values in all they do.
The conference was attended by more than 120 women leaders and future leaders, including 40 aspiring leaders who were the recipients of conference bursaries from the Education and Training Foundation.



LYNNE SEDGMORE
Executive director, 157 Group

Minister’s questions run deep

Skills Minister Nick Boles has posed a series of hard questions for the future of FE and skills. But for Lynne Sedgmore they raise just as many issues about the minister and the government as they do of the sector.

It is unusual for a Minister to be as clear as Nick Boles has been about his priorities for discussion with the sector.

At the Association of Employment and Learning Providers conference, he set out the same four questions that he first mentioned in Westminster Hall just over a fortnight ago.

They are a good guide to the areas where government is focusing attention in relation to FE and each indicates the possible direction of change.

They also reveal some policy confusion and unhelpful assumptions.

The first question concerns the age at which vocational education should start — should it be 14 or 16?

It raises issues about the role of university technical colleges (and their half-brothers

about which ministers rarely speak — studio schools and career colleges) as well as the role of FE colleges themselves.

It is odd however because one might have thought that the question had been answered definitively by his colleague [Schools Minister] Nick Gibb who has only recently insisted that all pupils follow the academic path prescribed by the EBacc until age 16.

The insistence that all pupils study English, maths, science, a modern foreign language and history or geography, as well as moves to make GCSEs harder effectively squeezes out time for any serious engagement with vocational education. Is the question really still open or do ministers just not talk to each other?

The second question should quash any thoughts that the ‘Dual Mandate’ consultation was closely aligned with Vince Cable and might fall from the agenda when he fell from power.

Mr Boles asks exactly the same question. ‘Should colleges specialise?’ and to avoid any doubt asks whether some should focus more

on ‘higher level skills’ and some on ‘training’ for those who have not had an ‘adequate education’.

Far from being novel, the Dual Mandate proposals reflect what appears to be the default option in Whitehall when considering FE — separate out higher level work into a limited set of high status institutions which are allowed to prosper: and retain a set of post-16 secondary moderns subject to ever more detailed central prescription.

The fact that most FE colleges currently undertake a richer and more complex set of missions, which inter-relate and can be mutually supportive, is routinely ignored

The fact that most FE colleges currently undertake a richer and more complex set of missions, which inter-relate and can be mutually supportive, is routinely ignored.

The third question asks who should make decisions about any re-organisation; ministers, local enterprises or combined authorities. The answer ‘none of the above’, though perfectly reasonable, doesn’t appear to be contemplated. The question moreover is ominously silent about whether ‘making decisions’ is limited to approval of college proposals or prefigures a much more active set of interventions as seen in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland where there has been sector wide rationalisation.

Whichever it is, it is curious that a minister who believes passionately in the efficacy of markets should limit the choice to one of which public sector bureaucracy should dictate the re-organisation of independent colleges.

It also seems risky to contemplate wholesale structural change at a time of destabilising cuts in funding.

The final question asks whether we have the right set of qualifications and whether the government has ‘been prescriptive enough’.

It is hard to know where to start. Someone should take Mr Boles aside and point out the long and sorry history of failed government reforms to the curriculum — GNVQs, AVCEs, the Diploma, the QCF.

They should point out the slowly unfolding disaster of compulsory resits in GCSE English and maths; they should show him the massive degree of prescription embodied in the funding and eligibility rules set out in ever expanding documentation from the Skills Funding Agency.

Like FE college specialization, the reform of vocational qualifications has long been seen in Whitehall as magic bullet, but a true reforming minister should ask himself whether he really wants to see any more of this.

Long-time lecturer Anne sets sail for new life



A long-serving lecturer is setting sail for a new life after bidding students and colleagues farewell, writes Billy Camden.

After two decades of loyal service at Suffolk New College, Anne Kidd is cruising into retirement by swapping the classroom for the deep blue sea.

The 60-year-old joined the Ipswich college in August 1995 and was programme leader for English and initial teacher education.

She is preparing to set sail around the world with her husband, Mark, on their yacht Erica after saying her goodbyes to students and colleagues.

“The beauty about an around the world trip is that it can last as long as you want it to. We had some friends do it, taking them nine years,” said the mum-of-two.

“Once you are retired you have the freedom to stay and go to different places whenever you want. It is absolutely wonderful.

“We are still planning our route. We are doing a trip around the Canary Islands soon so when we do go we will go to different places. The beauty is that we can stay in certain places at different times and move on when we want. The freedom is great.

“I’m somewhat nervous, the longest time I’ve ever been out as sea in one go for is 24 hours and I’ll certainly be out there for a lot longer than that during this adventure.”

She added: “I will miss the people the



most, for their support, hard work and ability to keep smiling even under extreme pressure.

“I will also miss being in a classroom teaching as that always remained the part of the job I loved best — it kept me sane when all the paperwork seemed overwhelming.”

Anne, who also worked for Tower Hamlets College, London, for a decade before joining Suffolk New College, said she would miss teaching, but that changes to the profession had not always been for the better.

“There is less time to prepare lessons, a lot more focus on data and analysing data and making interventions, which makes the job less enjoyable because it impacts on

what you want to be doing, and that is physically teaching in the classroom.”

She added: “When I started teaching there were no computers, we were still using Banda machines, which makes me sound a bit like a dinosaur.

And because of this “evolution in technology”, says the way students learn has changed “enormously”.

“If they [the learners] want to research something then they just do it at a click of a button — students don’t have to go away and spend hours, even days, researching,” she said.

“It has definitely sped their learning up.”

Marianne Flack, director of English, maths and student support at New Suffolk College, paid tribute to Anne.

She said: “Anne’s passion for and extensive experience in teaching has been an asset to the college.

“During her time, she has supported many new and existing teachers develop their practice so that they can give the students the best possible learning experience while at college.”

DO YOU WANT TO BE IN CAMPUS ROUND-UP?

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& MOVERS SHAKERS

Your weekly guide to who’s new and who’s leaving

Former European Commission consultant Nick Juba is to become the new chief executive of cash-strapped City College Brighton and Hove.

He takes over at the 6,000-learner college from interim chief executive Monica Box, who is also interim principal, on September 21.

His appointment comes after FE Commissioner Dr David Collins was sent in with the college, rated by Ofsted as good in 2011, having been issued Skills Funding Agency notice of concern about finances.

Dr Collins pointed out in February, following the departure of Lynn Thackway as Ms Box’s predecessor, how “financial difficulties have coincided with a period of extensive instability in its executive team”.

Mr Juba is currently a director of the University of the Arts London, where he oversees the university’s awarding body responsible for strategic direction and improving the quality of pre-degree education in the arts.

He has previously worked at the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, an agency of the Department for Education, as senior adviser, as well as the European Commission.

“I am enormously excited to be given the opportunity to lead the college and work with students, staff, partners and the wider community to build on its past successes to ensure its future success,” said University of Brighton graduate Mr Juba, who has served as governors’ board chair at Worthing’s Northbrook College.

Julie Nerney, governors’ board chair, said: “We are immensely impressed by Nick’s long experience of working within the educational sector, his expertise of educational standards and qualifications, and work-related FE.”

A college spokesperson said the principal appointment process was underway and expected to be concluded by the end of the month.

Meanwhile, former Cambridge Regional



College assistant principal for employer engagement Laraine Moody is the new vice principal for employer engagement at West Suffolk College.

“I am absolutely delighted to have taken up the new role and am looking forward to working closely with employers in the region,” she said.

“West Suffolk College is a forward-looking college which prides itself on the quality of experience for its learners and employers and I am very excited to be part of taking this forward.”

Principal Dr Nikos Savvas said: “We are delighted to welcome Laraine on board. She has extensive and relevant experience in this area and I know will be a dynamic leader to our already highly proficient employer

responsive and apprenticeship department.

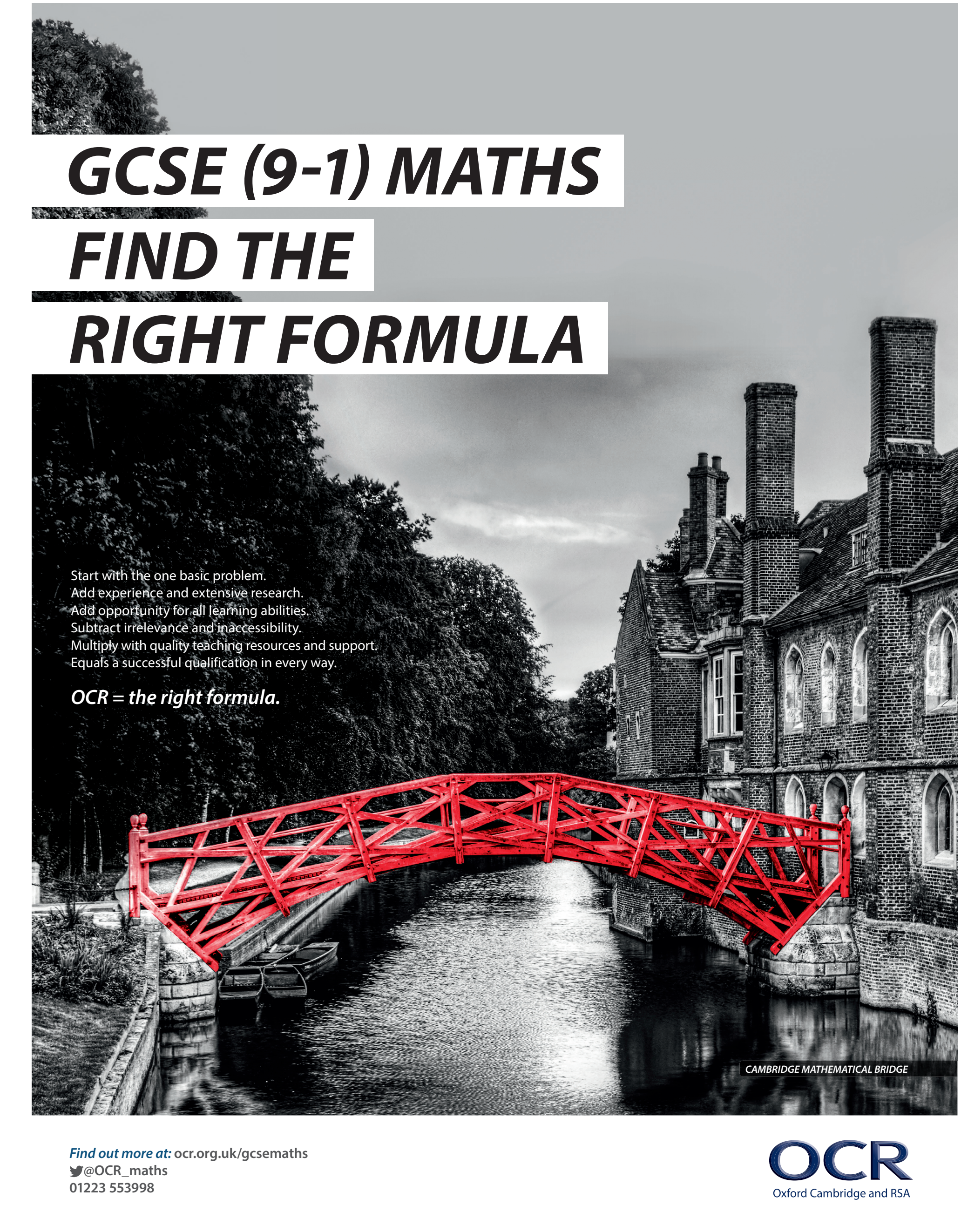
“We see ourselves as an engine in this region’s economy and this can only be achieved by excellent collaborations with businesses and local employers and the provision of skilled future workforces.”

And Basingstoke College of Technology has a new director of student experience in Alexis Smith.

She joins from Richmond Upon Thames College, where she was head of student services.

“My role here is to support the learner journey and provide the highest quality student experience,” she said.

“This means from a first open day visit right through to enrolling and progressing through the college and beyond.”



GCSE (9-1) MATHS

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RIGHT FORMULA

Start with the one basic problem.
Add experience and extensive research.
Add opportunity for all learning abilities.
Subtract irrelevance and inaccessibility.
Multiply with quality teaching resources and support.
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Want to be part of it? We are seeking our next ...

Director of Marketing, Corporate Relations & Enterprise

Salary £48,019 to £52,991

Are you an ambitious, talented and dynamic business and marketing professional?


City College Plymouth prides itself on offering an exceptional experience to its students. We are also justifiably proud of the significant contribution we make to the social, cultural and economic success of the region and of our exceptionally strong links with industry and employers.

A fantastic opportunity has arisen to lead our superb Marketing, Corporate Relations & Enterprise team. This is a key strategic role, with responsibility for the College's B2C and B2B marketing and commercial activities to meet income generation targets and build partnerships.

Confident and dynamic, with an impressive list of industry contacts, the successful candidate will lead a team of experienced and highly motivated individuals to achieve College targets and KPIs. Strong leadership skills coupled with the ability to drive projects forward is an essential element of this role, along with experience of the further or higher education sectors and a passion for delivering first-class results.

The post holder will be a creative thinker, able to translate ideas into operational plans. Needless to say, experience of forging meaningful, sustainable and mutually beneficial partnerships is a prerequisite.


For a confidential and informal discussion about the post, please contact the Principal & CEO, Phil Davies, on 01752 305707.



BE PART OF IT

Closing date: **8 July 2015**

To apply, please visit the College e-recruitment site at www.cityplym.ac.uk/jobs.



ANNOUNCEMENT

Senior Associate – Grants and Fellowships

FETL is an independent charity and Think Tank. We want to build a body of knowledge to shape the leadership of thinking in Further Education and Skills. We fund Fellowships for individuals and Grants to organisations who want to work with us to develop knowledge of and for leadership in the sector.

We are seeking an additional member to join our team. With a track record in supporting projects you will have strong relationship and management skills gained within the FE & Skills sector, have excellent interpersonal skills and a good knowledge and practical understanding of research. The ability to establish your credibility rapidly by supporting and monitoring our funded projects through a hands on approach will be critical to this role.


This is a part time, contractor role working with a small team. The role is home based but requires regular travel throughout the UK.

For an application pack please email enquiries@fetl.org.uk

 twitter.com/FETforL

VICE PRINCIPAL – CURRICULUM AND QUALITY

Organisation:	Fairfield Farm College
Organisation type:	Independent Specialist College
City/town:	Near Westbury, travel within Wiltshire and South West
Salary:	£45,000
Address:	43 High Street, Dilton Marsh, Wilts BA13 4DL
Post Date:	1st January 2016 (or sooner)



Fairfield Farm College is an Independent Specialist College that provides flexible day and residential courses to young people with learning disabilities.

You will have experience of working in a leadership position within education with a curriculum and standards focus. You will have experience of managing diverse teams of teaching and support staff including carrying out observations and appraisals. You will have experience of timetabling, working with external awarding organisations and have led on quality assurance processes to national framework standards.

You will be self-motivated and be able to work independently and prioritise workload. The post reports to the Principal but you will work directly with other members of the college management team.

Fairfield Farm College has a strong and supportive Board of Trustees and a dedicated Senior Team who are committed to the advancement of education, care and employment of young people with learning disabilities.

If you are ambitious, creative and have the vision to lead change and deliver quality provision for young people with learning disabilities, then we would be interested in hearing from you.

For a confidential discussion about the post, please contact Dr Tina Pagett (Principal) on 01373 866062 or email tina.pagett@fairfieldfarmcollege.ac.uk

To download an information pack and/or apply online, please visit our www.fairfieldopportunityfarm.ac.uk

CLOSING DATE: WEDNESDAY 15TH JULY 2015

INTERVIEW DATE: 17TH, 20TH AND/OR 21ST JULY 2015

Fairfield Opportunity Farm (Dilton) Ltd is a registered charity. (Number 273924)

JOBS



New vision, new plans... new opportunities.

We have a number of exciting new roles available which offer the opportunity for you to join our expanding provision. If you are an organised, enthusiastic team player, able to work flexibly to deliver outstanding learner outcomes and share our mission of sustaining an inclusive learning environment, we would really like to hear from you!

Curriculum Manager (0.6FTE)

Salary £32,142 - £36,162 per annum pro rata

Innovative community learning provision with a focus on enterprise and employability for adults not engaged in learning.

We are looking for a manager for a new project, Get into Learning. Working with a team of academic staff and volunteers together with partners, you will be developing and expanding an exciting programme of short courses in a range of community venues. We need an inspirational teacher who is able to teach on a range of topics. You will be enthusiastic about community learning, have experience in curriculum design, planning and delivery, and be aiming to move into a management role.

Closing date: 9am on Monday 6 July 2015
Interviews: Wednesday 15 July 2015

Media Production and Communication - Curriculum Manager

Salary £32,142 - £36,162 per annum

We are looking for an experienced manager who is a qualified and inspirational teacher of Media Production. You will be able to expand our current offer of courses for adult learners which include: Digital Arts, Performing Arts, Languages and Humanities. Adopting a culture of continuous improvement, you will lead on quality assurance for our accredited Level 2 and Level 3 offer across the department. You will also manage Level 2 Creative Media Production and the Media pathway on our Foundation Diploma in Art and Design (EDEXCEL Level 3).

Closing date: 9am on Monday 6 July 2015
Interviews: Friday 17 July 2015

Examinations Officer

Salary £21,940 - £25,389 per annum

The Examinations Officer will ensure timely and effective administration and coordination of examinations and examination entries across the College in accordance with examination board rules and in support of curriculum areas and our Learners. The Examination Officer will be managed by the MIS Director and will work across MIS to ensure results are recorded fully and accurately. You will need to be well organised with excellent interpersonal and communication skills and have a high level of ICT skills.

Closing date: 9am on Monday 6 July 2015
Interviews: TBC

For further details and to apply for one of the above posts please contact Jo Turner on: jturner@wmcollege.ac.uk

Or please download further details and an application pack from our website: www.wmcollege.ac.uk

When you have completed your application you can email it to: jturner@wmcollege.ac.uk

or send it by post to: Jo Turner, Working Men's College, 44 Crowndale Road, NW1 1TR



The Camden College

WMC actively strives to be an equal opportunities employer and welcomes applicants from all sections of the community. All appointments will be solely on merit. Registered Charity No. 312803.

Tube: Mornington Crescent 2mins / Camden Town, Euston & St Pancras 10 mins



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College



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Graduate Maths Lecturer

– Ref 2500

£20,856 per annum whilst training
£23,382 starting salary in role

We're committed to attracting and retaining a staff team which has high expectations for our College and for what our learners achieve. You will benefit from excellent training, a competitive starting salary and great opportunities for career progression once you have qualified. The successful candidate will be mentored by experienced Lecturers and gain teaching experience across a range of academic and vocational courses.

You'll become a Postgraduate student with us studying the Diploma in Education & Training. Your tuition fee will be paid by us and you will be paid a salary of £20,856 allowing you the time to focus on your studies.

Not only will we support you throughout your training but once you've successfully completed the course we guarantee you employment with a starting salary of £23,382.



This role is not limited to recent graduates and we will also consider any individual with a relevant degree as long as you have no teaching qualification but have industry experience, and wish to retrain as a teacher.

Please note you can only be considered for this role if you have a Maths Degree or a subject with a majority Maths content. You also cannot be considered for this role, if you already have teaching experience or a teaching qualification.

You will be a Graduate with a 2.2 or above degree in Maths or in a subject with a high maths content such as Computer Programming, Mechanical Engineering, Physics or Accountancy.

For further information on the role that the job description and person specification cannot answer, please contact Linda McDonald, Head of Academy on 0115 8380011.

The assessment date for this post will be Thursday 16 July 2015.

The closing date for this post is Monday 6 July 2015.

Apply online at www.ncn.ac.uk/vacancies

Wigan & Leigh College's Maths & English team is expanding!

Maths & English Lecturers

Permanent opportunities with salary up to £33,753 and additional incentives available for excellent candidates



Do you want to be part of a rapidly improving team which is vital to the development of our learners and integral to our drive toward outstanding?

Do you...

- Believe that all learners can achieve?
- Value the importance of maths and English skills to all?
- Want to embark on an exciting professional journey in a growing provision?

Full and part time hours available

We are seeking **outstanding practitioners** who will lead and manage achievement and support the Director of maths and English in the progress of all our students.

The **maths and English team** work from a dedicated learning zone which brings together the resources and lecturers to ensure that learners have the best possible experience.

Applicants will be expected to deliver on a range of courses including GCSEs, Functional Skills, Adult Awards and Level 3 Progression.

Wigan & Leigh College believe that maths and English are key areas of study which support students on their progression through College and on to HE or employment.

Our aim is to assist students to become independent learners who can meet standards of maths and English and are able to utilise these in the world of work. We are committed to ensuring that students reach their full potential and learn in a stimulating environment that challenges and motivates, using learning technology effectively to enhance and extend students' and apprentices' knowledge and skills.

To be considered for this opportunity, you will:

- Hold relevant maths and/or English qualifications.
- Have a proven track record of impact (We will also consider recent Cert Ed/PGCE graduates).
- Possess outstanding subject knowledge and passion for your subject.

For more information on this vacancy or to complete an application form visit:

www.wigan-leigh.ac.uk/job-vacancies

Closing date for applications is 12 noon, Monday 13th July 2015, for any questions call 01942 761 554. The successful candidates will be required to apply for a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Enhanced check.



www.learningcurvegroup.co.uk

Maths and English Associate Tutor

We are recruiting across the country for English and Maths Associate Tutors.

For more information, or to apply, please contact hr@learningcurvegroup.co.uk

Or call: **01388 777 129**

Job Description and Role:

Learning Curve Group require Associate Tutors in Maths and English to deliver a range of qualifications within our flexible learning portfolio at Level 1 and Level 2. All qualifications are nationally accredited through NCFE and include Level 1 certificates and functional skills at Level 2.

Are you?:

A candidate who holds a degree, a teaching qualification and have a subject specialisation at Level 5.

We are also looking for an individual who is:

- Experienced in teaching and assessing in a post-16 environment
- Self-managing and flexible in their working approach
- Passionate about Maths and/or English and experienced at delivering flexible learning programmes
- Proficient in IT
- Able to work on a self-employed flexible basis





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SPORTS, EDUCATION
& POSITIVE ACTIVITIES
www.letmeplay.co.uk

English and Maths Functional Skills Tutor

Job Purpose

The primary aim of this post is to engage, tutor and support the functional skill delivery with our NEET Programmes. The English/maths tutor will deliver Functional skills lessons across all 10 of our sites across London with the hope of getting the young people through their functional skill qualifications which will help with their progression and self-development.

Required Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

The Functional Skill Tutor must have a passion for working with young people, and be committed to raising standards, reliable, enthusiastic and motivated. They must possess excellent communication, teamwork, leadership, ICT and management skills and be able to build and sustain effective working relationships with staff, parents and the wider community. Knowledge of the IV and EV process is desirable.

Education and Experience

- Experience of working with young people aged 16 plus.
- A degree in your chosen field.
- Experience of delivering training and working in diverse community and/or sports settings
- Experience of working with young people who are hard to engage with.
- Passionate about maths and/or English and experienced at delivering flexible learning programmes.

Work Environment


Your work environment for the nature of this role is the education centre that we are operating out of at any given time. Your role will include working from the LMP head office and any other places that we are doing education delivery from.

Abbreviated Terms & Conditions

Salary	TBC- Depending on experience.
Location	across London
Working Hours	Really flexible Monday-Friday.
Contract Period	The post is offered on a rolling contract.

To Apply:

Please send a copy of your current CV to education@letmeplay.co.uk for more information please visit www.lmpcareers-site.com



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skills

FULL TIME MATHS & ENGLISH TUTOR/TEACHER - £35,000PA OTE

LOCATION: ENGLAND

Due to the outstanding successes of our work to date, we are looking to recruit a new team of 15 experienced Skills for Life tutors.

You will be delivering English and Maths from Entry Level through to Level 2, contextualised with a vocational award. Some delivery will be in the Health and Social Care sector, and therefore any experience in the H&SC sector would be an advantage but not essential.

The role will be working on a peripatetic basis, delivering in your region. Willingness to travel and your own transport are essential.

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA – PLEASE DO NOT APPLY IF YOU CAN'T COMPLY:

- Full time ONLY with flexible hours
- Have achieved a recognised full teaching qualification – Cert Ed / PGCE / DTLLS or equivalent
- Experience in teaching English and/or Maths
- Outstanding personal written and verbal communication skills
- A driving license and access to your own transportation

HIGHLY DESIRED CRITERIA:

- Experience of working with adult learners
- Working towards or have achieved a Level 4/5 Subject Specialist qualification in Literacy and/or Numeracy
- Excellent ICT Skills

The successful candidate will also be required to have a valid DBS Clearance Check.

In the first instance, please send an email outlining your recent relevant experience together with your CV.

NCC Skills Ltd is an Equal Opportunities Employer

No agencies please amanda.fisher@ncc.ac.uk

www.ncc.ac.uk



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Excellence in FE



Maths and English Lecturing Opportunities Nationwide!

Protocol has recruited candidates for over 1,000 Maths and English opportunities this academic year alone! With a further 150 opportunities available across the UK every month we can help you find your next role now!

Some of our top temporary opportunities available now...

Functional Skills English Lecturer (Liverpool)
2.5 hours per week, £18 - £20 per hour + holiday pay

Functional Skills English Lecturer (Milton Keynes)
Various hours available, £16 - £18 per hour + holiday pay

GCSE Maths Lecturer (Birmingham)
Various hours available, £17 - £18 per hour + holiday pay


GCSE Maths Lecturer (Lancashire)
Full time, 37 hours, £17 - £19 per hour + holiday pay

To apply for one of these roles or to be considered for any of the amazing opportunities we have across the UK please send your CV to jobs@protocol.co.uk or visit www.protocol.co.uk to register online.

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New College Stamford
All round excellence

LECTURER IN FOUNDATION MATHS

Salary:

Unqualified: £23,712 - £25,137 pa

Qualified: £25,884 - £31,821 pa

Further progression: £32,778 - £33,753 pa

Closing Date: 12 July 2015

A fantastic opportunity to join the College on its mission to become Outstanding - Are you up for the challenge?

We are seeking to recruit an innovative and student focused lecturer, responsible for the planning and successful delivery of Functional Skills and GCSE Maths. You will have the ability to teach and engage students across a wide range of vocational courses.

The successful candidate will have significant skills and knowledge of teaching Maths at Entry Level 1-3, hold a teaching qualification (or a willingness to work towards), and be highly motivated to provide an outstanding service to our learners. Candidates will be able to contribute effectively to the successful learning experiences of students in the College through effective teaching that meets or exceeds College standards and results in high levels of student retention and achievement.

This is a great opportunity to join a growing team as we work together to meet the increasing demands of obtaining Maths qualifications across vocational programmes within Further Education.

For further information and to apply: www.stamford.ac.uk/jobs/

Recognising the potential of a diverse community New College Stamford is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Successful candidates will be required to complete an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) application. New College Stamford is a 'Specified Place'

DEVELOPING SKILLS AND BEHAVIOURS FOR WORK AND LIFE

We work closely with teachers and employers to ensure our qualifications meet the needs of people entering or returning to the workplace. Our extensive Life Skills suite meets employer requirements and equips learners with valuable transferable skills, behaviours and attributes they need to prosper.

Find out more at: ocr.org.uk/vocational
Call our customer contact centre: 02476 851509
or email: vocational.qualifications@ocr.org.uk

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Oxford Cambridge and RSA

FE Week Sudoku challenge

How to play: Fill in all blank squares making sure that each row, column and 3 by 3 box contains the numbers 1 to 9

Spot the difference
to WIN an FE Week mug



Spot five differences. First correct entry wins an FE Week mug. Text your name and picture of your completed spot the difference to 07969 166 374.
Last week's spot the difference winner was James Lindley (pictured right), marketing apprentice at North Lindsey College, Scunthorpe.



9		6		4				
			2			3		
		5			1			6
		9		2		6	3	
	8						9	
	6	3		5		4		
6			9			1		
		2			8			
				1		2		8

Difficulty:
EASY

3				8				
	5			2	9			7
	2	1	5					4
9	4							
		8				3		
							2	8
2					6	9	5	
	7			5	9		8	
				2				6

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

Solutions:
Next week

Last Week's solutions

7	8	5	4	3	1	6	2	9
9	1	4	2	8	6	5	3	7
6	3	2	5	9	7	8	1	4
5	6	1	8	4	2	7	9	3
4	7	9	6	1	3	2	8	5
3	2	8	7	5	9	4	6	1
2	4	3	9	7	8	1	5	6
1	5	6	3	2	4	9	7	8
8	9	7	1	6	5	3	4	2

Difficulty:
EASY

3	6	9	8	7	4	5	1	2
8	5	4	2	9	1	6	7	3
7	2	1	5	6	3	8	9	4
9	4	2	1	3	8	7	6	5
5	1	8	6	2	7	3	4	9
6	3	7	9	4	5	1	2	8
2	8	3	4	1	6	9	5	7
4	7	6	3	5	9	2	8	1
1	9	5	7	8	2	4	3	6

Difficulty:
MEDIUM